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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the development of comprehensive psycho-educational groups for students in a secondary school attached to a Japanese university. Although deliberate application of psychological knowledge to self-empowerment has been a central component of counseling programs in the United States, such practice is only now emerging in Japan. This project was operated from two sites: one at the University of Tokyo and other at the University of Georgia. The objective was to help students learn new behaviors through a program of active participation of both mind and body. The groups also served to stimulate students' independence and growth, and provided a place for students and teachers to collaborate and address problems. The program served as a model to show the real world practice of counselors in schools. The class was found useful and interesting to a large proportion of the students. Students also reported that their concentration improved and they were less nervous or anxious. Recommendations for the future include the need for the program to continue to refine the curriculum and to test for anticipated changes in student development. The goal is to introduce the group work approach to local schools. (Contains 1 addendum, 1 table, 3 figures, and 78 references.) (JDM)

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Developing Psycho-Educational Groups for Japanese High Schools

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Abstract

The development of comprehensive psycho-educational groups for students in a secondary school attached to a Japanese university is presented. The rationale for comprehensive psycho-educational programs, basic concepts, methods and procedures, and curriculum development to enhance the self-assertion skills of Japanese youth are discussed.

Developing Psycho-Educational Groups for Japanese High Schools

Youth violence in Japan has been escalating for the past decade, with youth under 20 now accounting for more than half of all violent acts committed in Japan. Although the crime rate for youthful offenders is approaching 5% (nowhere near the 20-25% cited for American youth), Japanese educators are rightly concerned about the future for their children. In responding to these findings, the Ministry of Education has initiated a comprehensive reform package intended to bring about a shift from cramming and competition to creativity and collaboration. In particular, these reforms speak to the development of a comprehensive, or variously integrated (sogo) curriculum that is intended to develop a person's full resources (zenjin).

Critically, these reforms require that school counselors be assigned to every public middle school by the year 2006. One of the critical roles expected of school counselors is to participate actively in the development of new educational programs as a significant feature of the new Japanese school of the 21st century. What role school counselors are to play in Japan, what form their training should take, and how they are to be integrated into a comprehensive, developmental and preventive curriculum are unknown. What is clear is that they are expected to address themselves to the reduction of youth violence and widespread anomie that affect the daily lives of Japanese students.

Addressing Youth Violence

All students, whether the perpetrator, victim, or bystander, are negatively affected by violence that diminishes their capacity to be successful in school. Recent research has shown that much of the rising student violence is related to the inability of some students to find socially acceptable means for expressing their frustration and to relieve their stress. Japanese education has been very effective in producing a homogeneous workforce with considerable aptitude and motivation for achievement. However, this success came by a process of unreasonably intense competition for admission to higher education and at the cost of individual creativity.

The society that currently supports Japanese schools has become extraordinarily complex, resulting in many factors that can increase stress, with few factors to decrease it. As a consequence, there is no guarantee of being secure from trauma, whether one is an adult or a child. In a world where social change proceeds on a global scale, there is a great probability

that the Japanese instructional manuals that are prepared to address a new situation one day, may no longer be effective the next. This repetitive obsolescence occurs because these manuals are written generally to guide the operation of machines or technical instruments. It is impossible, however, to create a manual that can conveniently describe the "operations" of people and their "proper" manipulation in exacting detail. Comprehending fully the implications of this point seems the biggest hurdle to be overcome by the current "young generation" of Japanese (students as well as teachers) who have come to depend on the use of various types of manuals to structure their lives.

Critics, both inside and outside Japan, have pointed to the general inability of Japanese to assert themselves in a public discussion as central to understanding and combating youth violence. In particular, they suggest that the tendency among Japanese toward introspection in the face of conflict is a consequence of their deeply rooted values about social hierarchy and public behaviour. Japanese educators are being challenged to address this relative lack of self-assertiveness in the public arena. It is argued that they need to encourage the education of a generation who can assert themselves persuasively in public without resorting to violence or self-deprecation, while also honoring the collectivism that underlies Japanese culture. Recognizing the need to learn how to express themselves in public discussion, Japanese are turning to group work as a means to encourage these interpersonal skills in their youth. This awareness of the need for infusing counseling and psychological services into Japanese efforts at educational reform coincides with similar calls for educational reform in the United States (Hayes, Dagley, & Horne, 1996; Kameguchi, 2000b, Paisley & Hayes, 2000).

Comprehensive Psycho-Education

The central assumption guiding our work is that what we know about human development can be used to structure both the curriculum and the experience of our students. In our curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation, we have been guided by what we shall refer to as a systemic/constructivist perspective. In particular, we accept the epistemological position that development is characterized by a dialogical process of self-other transactions that encourage increasingly complex and abstract modes of reasoning. We accept that mind and self are both created through and sustained by interactions with others such that the other is not an instrument for the self but rather is mutually transformative. We believe that humans

development is characterized by a natural growing process that moves toward consistency, entirety, and harmony that seeks to integrate the self across multiple levels of individual personality but also across personal, collective, and community relationships. We believe this view transcends the unfortunate dichotomy of individualism and collectivism that informs common cultural distinctions between the United States and Japan but obscures potential points for true collaboration. As Markus and Kitayama (1991) presented the case:

> Achieving the cultural goal [of many Western cultures] of independence requires constructing oneself as an individual whose behaviour is organized and made meaningful primarily by reference to one's own internal repertoire of thoughts, feelings, and actions, rather than by reference to the thoughts, feelings and actions of others . . . . In contrast, many non-Western cultures insist . . . [that] experiencing interdependence entails seeing oneself as part of an encompassing social relationship and recognizing that one's behaviour is determined, contingent on, and, to a large extent organized by what the actor perceives to be the thoughts, feelings, and actions of *others* [italics in original] in the relationship. The Japanese experience of the self, therefore, includes a sense of interdependence of one's status as a particular in a larger social unit. (p. 227)

In an attempt to resolve this dichotomy, Sampson (2000) argued that "because of the formative quality of the person-other relationship, there can be no individuality without collectivity, no independence without interdependence, and vice versa. The person-other relationship in dialogue is both independent and interdependent, not one or the other " (p. 1429). This position offers a particular bridge between the artificial contrast created by notions of the independent self of Western culture and the interdependent self of many Eastern cultures.

Such an understanding of self-development, while not dominant in American psychology, has a long tradition in American psychology as represented in William James' (1890) pragmatism, George Herbert Mead's (1934) theory of symbolic interactionism, and John Dewey's (1916/1944) educational philosophy, and more recently in Lawrence Kohlberg's (1969) theory of moral development (1969), George Kelly's (1955) personal construct psychology, Jean Piaget's (1954/1936) genetic epistemology, and Kenneth Gergen's (1990) social constructionism. Although such a position among Japanese is less well-developed as a

theory of psychology, it is part of their basic social and ethical philosophy as represented in Confuciansim (see, for example, Breling, 1996). For Japanese, the self has meaning fully only when understood in the context of social relationships. In effect, one exists only with and not through relationships with significant others in a social context. Not surprisingly, therefore, Japanese accept a set of time-honored values and behavioral norms that define all human relationships as embodied in respect for one's parents, loyalty to the larger social order, and the maintenance of one's place in society.

The present collaboration between American and Japanese psychologists, therefore, draws upon a particular notion of the self as an interdependent meaning maker. In so doing, we have attempted to integrate a systemic/constructivist approach that accepts that individuals are self-regulating agents who are engaged in complex, recursive transactions with their environment, especially others in a social environment (Hayes & Oppenheim, 1997; Kameguchi, 2000d). Constructivists argue that truth and knowledge are constructions within the mind of the individual and that meaning making and valuing are based on those constructions. Development from this view is the natural outcome of attempts to make stable sense of a changing world. In effect, development represents successively more complex attempts to make meaning of the facts of one's social experience and learning is the outcome of organizing that experience. From such a perspective, experience is not just the best teacher; it is the only teacher. It is in this way that culture directs one's attention to and provides the context for understanding socially relevant experiences (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000).

Taking a constructivist perspective, therefore, educators serve as architects for appropriate educational experiences through which the probability for developmental advancement is most likely (Amerel, 1989; Dagley, 1987; Hayes, 1991, 1994b; Hoshmond & Polkinghorne, 1992; Kohlberg & Mayer, 1972; Kuhn, Amsel, & O'Laughlin, 1988; Schon, 1987; Sprinthall & Thies-Sprinthall, 1993; Weinstein & Alschuler, 1985). By their intentional structuring of the educative experience, educators can stimulate their students' development.

Experience alone is not sufficient for change to occur, however. Using the work of Sprinthall, Reiman, and Thies-Sprinthall (1993), we can look inside this process to understand the components that are necessary for these experiences to be effective: (a) opportunities for both significant role-taking and guided reflection related to that experience; (b) a balance of

challenge and support; and, (c) a sense of continuity. There must also be systematic opportunities to reflect upon and process that experience. In addition to guided self-reflection, educators need to provide sufficient challenge to stretch their students cognitively. Placing students in situations that demand reflection upon their own reasoning while simultaneously attempting to understand the experience of the other as the other, has been shown to stimulate development (Kohlberg, 1985). Conducted in the context of the group as a whole, this process also gives students opportunities to hear the reasoning and be exposed to the ideas of others (Hayes, 1991). Many experiences in educational and/or clinical settings provide authentic dilemmas for individual reflection and group discussion.

Although the challenge and the resulting state of dissonance are necessary and growth producing, they are not without pain or loss. Therefore, personal support for individuals facing such challenges becomes essential. The dynamic balance of challenge and support requires effective facilitators to monitor and adjust their interventions constantly so that students continue to move forward and to embrace educational challenges without becoming overwhelmed by them.

Finally, the continuity noted by Sprinthall and Thies-Sprinthall refers to the longer time commitment required to facilitate developmental change, most probably a minimum of six months to a year. Brief interventions may be appropriate for sharing information or general awareness but not for promoting development. Developmental change takes time and requires deliberate and sustained efforts (Kuhmerker, Gielen, & Hayes, 1991; Lickona, 1989; Mosher, 1980; Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989; Reimer, Paolitto, & Hersh, 1990).

Although the deliberate application of psychological knowledge to self-empowerment (Mosher & Sprinthall, 1970) has been a central component of school counseling programs in the United States (Paisley & Hibbard, 1989), such practice is only now emerging in Japan. As used by Japanese, "psycho-education" is a generic term that describes a series of educational programs used to integrate two important concepts: "comprehensive study" and "mind education." Initially, clinical techniques from individual and group psychotherapy were applied directly to classrooms in many cases. Over time, however, these techniques were adapted to address the demands more specific to schools as public educational institutions (e.g., educational mission, 50-minute class periods, non-residential population, diverse socio-economic population). Originally derived

from different educational contexts, these two concepts are currently being combined in a single construct to provide a comprehensive focus for school-based interventions in Japan. As a result, numerous psycho-educational programs have been developed to address a variety of educational situations (Ichihashi, 1999). Accordingly, we have begun the first deliberate attempt to integrate three practices of different educational fields, 'psycho-education', 'comprehensive studies', and 'mind education' in Japanese schools coincident with the dawn of new millennium.

Comprehensive Study

The research and curriculum development described herein have been undertaken at a public secondary school that is organizationally "attached" [Fuzoku] to the School of Education at The University of Tokyo [Todai]. Unlike most schools in Japan that select their students based on exam scores and previous academic attainment, Todai Fuzuko enrolls a diverse student body of approximately 750 students who are selected through a lottery. By providing "ordinary" students with an "ordinary" curriculum as well as "special" studies, the 45 professional staff at Todai Fuzoku are attempting to produce an "extraordinary" superiority in overall human capability while nourishing a rich humanity.

In curricular reviews conducted in the 1990s, it was generally acknowledged that by the time they reached the third grade of middle school, students had already participated in a large number of academic studies. Nonetheless, those studies had not always been integrated with an eye toward creating well-balanced personalities within the students. Understandably, children at this age face a set of developmental challenges that arise from changing social, biological, and psychological conditions that combine to make early adolescence a significant, if not also prolonged, developmental crisis.

Recognizing the significance of attending to this "hidden" developmental curriculum, the faculty instituted a program of "comprehensive study" in the third grade curriculum. Such study was expected to provide an opportunity for students to address themselves deliberately to significant developmental tasks by increasing the students' awareness that they are in crucial growing process, thereby letting them consciously observe their own growth. A subsequent program evaluation of four years of practice, however, revealed that some related institutional tasks required further improvement related to, for instance, materials development, research on

student guidance, revision of the teaching system, and the need to establish collaborative relationships with outside organisations.

Integration with "Mind Education"

A review of six years in the practice of comprehensive studies at Todai Fuzoku revealed the need to foster an integration of learnings within each student (viz. "internal comprehensivisation") (Todai Fuzoku, 1998). This task is closely related to educational tasks such as "mind education" or "living power" that have been highlighted in relation to school refusal, PTSD arising from natural disasters, most noticeably the Hanshin-Awaji earthquake, or the prevention of suicide resulting from being bullied (see Kameguchi, 2000c, 2000d).

Coincidentally, Todai Fuzoku had been planning to transform itself to offer consistent education by combining the middle and high schools beginning in the year 2000. The students in the high school grades who were supposed to take the course would have already undertaken "comprehensive studies" in the third grade of middle school and, therefore, were anticipated to be prepared to study "Introduction to Clinical Psychology," or (as translated literally from Japanese) "mind education." Accordingly, the study of psychology was proposed for inclusion in the core curriculum. In response to this proposal, the second author and his colleagues at both The University of Tokyo and at Todai Fuzoku began to create a responsive developmental curriculum for high school students. In 1996, the special program was designated part of the required comprehensive curriculum (Todai Fuzoku, 1998).

Today, comprehensive study at Todai Fuzoku is aimed at integrating and internalizing each student's experience and studies with the goal to enable each student to compose a unique but unified personality. Considering this aim, the authors and our colleagues are investigating the possibility of its realization according to the following objectives: (1) To help students learn new behaviors, through a program of active participation, of both mind and body, that will enable them to spend an enriched life voluntarily in communication with both nature and other people; (2) To stimulate students' independence and growth by providing opportunities to re-examine themselves and by extending their activities beyond the school to include the local community; (3) To provide a place for teachers and students to collaborate in addressing significant cultural and social problems; and, (4) To establish a foundation for lifelong learning that includes an

awareness of the surrounding society and a recognition of the importance of continued study (Kameguchi, Hayes, & Ichihashi, 2000)..

Cross-Cultural Collaboration

The authors have been working as part of a team of university professors, graduate students, public school teachers, and counselors to develop counseling interventions for Japanese school children. This team was initially developed by Kameguchi in 1998 in his dual role as a university professor and as a school counselor assigned to Todai Fuzoku (Center for Clinical Research on School Development, 1999). Through this arrangement, Todai Fuzoku serves as a laboratory for clinical and educational practice in collaboration with university-based professional preparation programs and research on educational reform.

From the outset, Kameguchi and his Japanese colleagues worked together using a collaborative model remarkably parallel to the one being developed by Hayes and his American colleagues at The University of Georgia to support reform in school counselor preparation and practice (Hayes, Dagley, & Horne, 1996; Paisley & Hayes, 2000). Unaware of one another's work at the time, the authors initiated plans for further collaboration upon meeting at an international conference held at the first author's institution. Acknowledging the fundamental intent of this movement for psychological studies, we launched a cross-cultural collaboration. Our study was aimed, not at describing some abstracted reality for the sake of the defined interests of a few researchers, but rather at understanding and responding to the real world demands of schools or homes as the principal places in which children are actually living.

This research project has been operated from two sites: one at the Center for Clinical Research on School Development in the Graduate School of Education of The University of Tokyo, and the other at the Department of Counselling and Human Development Services in the College of Education of The University of Georgia. At the same time, Todai Fuzoku was selected as a model school for understanding the real world practice of counselors in schools. Such a practical base is planned to be extended gradually to include other schools. Although the research team at The University of Georgia already had extensive practical experience in collaborative research with public schools in the state of Georgia (Blackman, Hayes, & Paisley, 2001), the Japanese were relatively inexperienced in conducting research and program development in this way. Nonetheless, collaboration on a variety of tasks (e.g., teacher training,

distance education, professional preparation of counselors), as well as at the various academic levels (P-16, graduate, and in-service), are anticipated as possible individual themes for future collaboration/cooperation on the international level, such as in our case, or more locally between schools and families, or between school counselors and teachers, school education boards and neighboring schools.

As international colleagues, we return recurrently to the observation that the social problems and the obvious consequences that are being faced are extraordinarily similar in both Japan and the United States. And yet, how they are made sense of, how the problems and their "causes" are understood expose the blind spots and widen the lens for an analysis from either a Japanese or an American perspective. In particular, Japanese schools seem quite effective in building a sense of community among their students but often at the expense of individual creativity and self–assertion. American schools, on the contrary, are quite effective at supporting individual creativity and fostering self-assertion, but often without promoting collaboration nor creating the learning community that so many American educators seek today. Because the cultural heritage of each of these countries is so very different, it has been necessary to understand the values inherent in each culture to be able to articulate their translation into educational practice.

Group Work with Japanese Adolescents

Although, the literature on Japanese schools emphasizes collaboration, teamwork, and discovery learning, the authors are aware of few deliberate attempts to address the lack of public discourse in Japanese classrooms, especially through the use of group work. Unlike the educational literature on Japanese schools, which supports the notion that guided reflection and small group discussion are part of the regular elementary school science curriculum, our experience with Japanese adolescents reveals a typical classroom as an orderly and quiet place populated with 35 or more receptive students. In reflecting on this difference between our personal experience and that in the literature, we have been reminded of the oft-repeated observation that American schools move K-12 from indoctrination to discovery while Japanese schools (not surprisingly) proceed the other way.

Japanese children are taught early on to move inward in a psychological sense while building a repertoire of socially acceptable "public" behaviors-- a "public face." Children are taught to

avoid conflict with others and the expression of sad or unhappy feelings is discouraged. Japanese children grow up knowing others are there to care for them but have little opportunity to discuss their own feelings. As a result, they develop a rich internal dialogue but a formalized interpersonal one. This orientation seems to account for the great amount of introspection and the general lack of spontaneous interpersonal behavior we have observed among Japanese secondary school students. In fact, students are reported to say that they prefer teachers who stay within the existing framework of the discipline in which knowledge-centered lessons are developed because they want to pass their entrance exams. Indeed, until recently, there was little need to talk in class.

Kameguchi offers that in the West, where things are reversed, therapy is so much about communication by talking because American children are rarely encouraged to internalize affect but instead are encouraged to negotiate their relationships with others in public (Why are we meeting like this? Who am I? Who are you? Who are we?). Japanese children, on the other hand, know who "we" are because they are part of "we" and vice versa.

By sharp contrast to the student behavior in the classroom described above, the student behavior outside of the regular classroom structure is remarkably student-directed. Extensive community building among students and support for one another is in sharp contrast to their general inability to be able to speak up in class. It's not entirely that they don't want to or will be potentially embarrassed or cause others to be embarrassed, it is also that they literally don't know how to talk in a large group. Its perhaps important to note here that elementary school children are typically organized in heterogeneous, family-like groups called *han* to carry out their in-school activities. Consequently, when we began our work with secondary school students, we found that they were quite comfortable talking to one another in these small groups. When asked to tell us what they personally found interesting or useful in the subgroup reports other classmates had just presented, however, no one spoke. Prompted that we only wanted their individual opinions, still no one spoke. Put back in subgroups of three or four, however, they immediately set to work sharing the notes on their own papers. When we tried to have small groups form into larger units of, let's say, 10-12, they get stuck again and didn't know how to begin to talk with one another. Interestingly, they behaved the same when put together with one other student they didn't know well.

Because we believe that some things are best learned from one another, such as collaboration, teamwork, and effective interpersonal relations, we have been developing group-oriented classroom interventions intended to enhance students' self-assertion skills and interpersonal effectiveness by encouraging interstudent participation and some public presentation of students` own ideas for examination. Building the sense of community necessary for a comprehensive educational program demands attention to the unique growth and development that can emerge through small group interaction (Dagley, Gazda, & Pistole, 1986; Glickman, Hayes, & Hensley, 1992; Hayes, 1991). In our attempts to build a comprehensive and integrated curriculum, we believe that group work provides a natural vehicle for encouraging the kind of collaboration necessary to support a learning community. In particular, group work provides an authentic experience for collaborative problem solving, encourages self-reflection, provides role-taking opportunities, and helps students to test their perceptions of self and others. Acting in the context of a public decision-making process helps group members consider the opinions of others and places responsibility on members for the consequences of their actions (Haan, 1977). Further, critical self-reflection and ongoing dialogue among group members should provide the necessary conditions for stimulating development.

The Curriculum

At the time of this writing, members of the team are teaching a course entitled "Introduction to Clinical Psychology" that was newly devised for the sixth grade students (equivalent to the third grade in a Japanese high school and the senior year in an American high school). The class meets for two consecutive 50-minute sessions once per week and uses texts and original materials prepared by the team members. This experimental class not only provides ideal field conditions for collaboration, but has also proven to be both stimulating and challenging for all the participants.

Class sessions routinely include small and large group discussion, large group instruction, and group problem solving using guided discussions and/or teacher-prepared worksheets. Topics have included assertiveness, emotional development, an introduction to basic theories of psychotherapy, transactional analysis (Ashihara, 1992; Berne, 1964; Stewart & Joines, 1987; Sugita, 1988), game analysis (Goulding & Goulding, 1979), life tasks (Manaster & Corsini, 1982),

decision making, family imaging (Kameguchi, 2000), relaxation training (Kameguchi, 1989), multiculturalism (see addendum), peer relationships (Kuze et at., 1980; Saito, 1996), group identification (Hashimoto, 1999), and group problem solving (Hayes, 1991). We have drawn heavily upon the group work literature for adolescents for ideas, but have to be resourceful in adapting these materials for their use with Japanese adolescents. Students complete written surveys during each session to assess their knowledge of psychology, attitudes toward one another and the various class formats, relevance of selected topics for their own development, and their recommendations for enhancing student participation in classroom activities.

Method

The remainder of this manuscript presents an analysis of the effects of 11 sessions over four subjects conducted with 35 students of the sixth grade (equivalent to the senior year in an American high school) during the first term (early April to mid July of 2000), at the mid-point of the total course. In addition, we present preliminary findings on the effects of 7 sessions conducted with 24 sixth grade students using a revised curriculum, which is, at this writing, mid-way through the second iteration of the full year-long course.

At the beginning and the end of each trial, four kinds of written tests were conducted: a 12-item stress check list, an 18-item concentration ability check list (e.g., "cannot concentrate on studying," "feel stiffness in the shoulder"), a 12-item anxiety and tension questionnaire (e.g., "I am easily accustomed to new situations," " I often worry that things may not go well"), and WAI test that were developed by the second author and his Japanese colleagues drawing upon the works of Okayasu et al. (1992), Nideffer and Sharpe (1976), Tsuji (1998), and Iwakuma (1995), respectively..

The Curriculum

Student materials that could be used as either textbook and workbook and were prepared as described by Ichihashi (ibid., 1998), and distributed to the students in every session. In addition, binders were distributed to enable students to organize the materials. The contents of each session were selected based on four standards: (1) simplicity: the use of "simple words" that are easily understood by students; (2) utility: providing knowledge that students can use in order to picture current behaviour or ideal ones, relationship, and life style; (3) economy: helping students understand various phenomena with the fewest concepts; and (4) diversity:

implementing knowledge that relates to the widest philosophical or theoretical background possible. Increasingly, we have integrated group process with the selected content to encourage greater inter-student participation and public discussion.

(Tentative) Outcomes

Weekly analyses show that students have generally been satisfied with the content and format of the curriculum. In particular, they rated most highly the units on strategies for improving interpersonal communication, family dynamics, and their experience in small group discussion.

Trial One

The responses of all students to all questionnaires conducted before and during each class were analyzed. More than 70% of the students responded that they had no previous knowledge of psychology, although more than 60 % answered that they were "interested" or "very much interested" in psychology. More than 60 % said that they thought that studying psychology would be "useful" or "very useful." In every theme except that related to "games" [in transactional analysis], more than half of then students replied 'very much interested' or "interested." Especially regarding the themes on "family" and "group," 70 to 80% of the students answered that they were interested. At the same time, the ratio of the students who answered "have no interest" was most significant on these two themes. On every theme, approximately 50% of the students had anticipated the class would be useful, more or less. In particular, students reported that the experience of learning and using the "family imaging" method was the most "useful" among all topics.

Results of a factor analysis on pre- and posttest scores, using the principal component method and promax rotation analysis performed on the concentration ability check sheet (n=35), identified two factors. The first factor was composed of 7 items, such as "capability to pay attention or concentrate immediately" or "ability to concentrate on reading instantly," which were interpreted as a factor of concentration. The second factor was composed of five items, such as "become less aware of events happening around because of obsession of his/her own thoughts", "tends to miss important events happening around because of narrowed attention by anxiety or tension", which were interpreted as an obstruction to concentration. Each α coefficient was calculated from the data (N=35) for the primary factor, and the secondary factor of concentration

capability, anxiety nervousness, and a stress check sheet, were 0.75, 0.67, 0.71, 0.77, and 0.83 respectively.

Concerning the result of the pre- and posttests related to the primary and secondary factors, total scores of highly added items on each factor were considered as the scores for students who were in that condition. Meanwhile, regarding anxiety, tension, and a stress check sheet, simple sum of each item was considered to be students' scores. Hereafter, each point shall be referred as scores for nervousness, and scores for stress.

For the purposes of analysis, the students were categorised into four groups according to the results of pre-class questionnaire. The students who replied that they were "interested" and "very much interested" in psychology were placed in the "interested group," and those who replied "not interested" and "no interest at all" were placed in the "not interested group." Similarly, for the result on usefulness, students who answered that they thought psychology would be "useful" and "very useful" were assigned to the "useful group," and those who said that it "might be useful more or less" and "would not be useful" were put into the "not useful group."

Implementing these group and gender differences as factors for our analysis, we conducted analysis of variance on four factors on pre- posttest × gender × interest × usefulness. As a result, the principle effect on pre- posttest was observed in the concentration obstructive factor ($p<.05$). In addition, the concentration factor showed the alternating effect of significant tendency on the "pre-post class" and "usefulness" ($p<.10$), and the same result on factors of anxiety and tension on "pre-post class" and "interest" ($p<.10$).

Trial Two

Because of the increased interest in and use of group work as opposed to lecture and examination that was more characteristic of the first trial, additional measures were developed to assess the students' satisfaction with the classroom experiences. In particular, students were asked at the end of each class to evaluate the day's lesson on five times using a five-point scale ("none"- "very") on five items: understanding of the class materials, how interesting they found the class, their understanding of the day's theme, their interest in the day's theme, and the usefulness of the class. In addition, they were asked to give the class an overall rating on a scale of 1-100.

Over seven sessions, student mean ratings across all sessions ranged from a low of 3.8 to a high of 4.6 on items1-5, with means of 4.3 (understanding class), 4.2 (interesting class), 4.2 (understanding theme), 4.3 (interesting theme), 4.0 (usefulness). Overall scores for each session show the highest ratings (88.1 with a mean across items 1-5 of 4.6) for the session on cultural differences (see attachment).

Analysis and Discussion

These preliminary results suggest that a psycho-educational program of structured group discussion of developmentally appropriate topics of relevance to adolescents can have a positive impact on the self-assertion and interpersonal relations of Japanese high school students. Results of the pre-class questionnaire suggest that students had neither profound knowledge nor particular interest in psychology prior to taking the course. Considering that taking the course was optional, these results suggest that some students might have chosen the class in order to avoid taking other courses. Similarly, in terms of prior knowledge and interests, the students were not particularly enthusiastic about what they might learn from the study of psychology, although more than 60% considered psychology potentially to be useful to some extent. This result could be explained by considering the influence of media such as TV or magazines, through which students may have developed preconceptions that the study of psychology would enable them to read other people's minds. Further, media attention to youth violence and possible motives for delinquent behavior had heightened student interest in psychology and school counseling, in particular. Significantly, several recent reports of student career interests placed school counselor at or near the top of every list. Thus, students were likely to have been highly motivated already before taking the class.

After taking the class, students reported the highest interest on the themes related to "family" and "group." This result reflects the interests one would expect developmentally for high school students whose understanding of their interpersonal struggles with family and others were deepened by their study in these two areas. Similarly, the themes considered most useful were related to the use "strokes" in transactional analysis, and to "family" and "family imaging methods," which is a projective test by which a client expresses his or her understanding of his or her family relationship on a paperboard with stickers. Many students seemed to appreciate the lectures on the nature of strokes (e.g., tendency to collect "negative" strokes unconsciously)

or on how to increase strokes, as an applicable theme for daily life. According to self-reports on the use of the "family imaging method," students had actually tried the method on classmates during class or their families at home. Using this method, many students connected their own interactive character or behaviour patterns with the result of their "objective" observations of their families. This application provides a good example of how a classroom activity enhanced students' personal understanding as well as provided an enhanced understanding of others by applying the teaching materials voluntarily beyond the classroom.

Students' positive evaluation of the class appears, in part, to be related to the reduction of "concentration obstruction." Students appear to have been able to examine and reconcile their own psychological status, as well as that of others, from various perspectives based on their experience in class though the lectures, reading materials, and interactive and self-analytic experiences in class. Although a simple principal effect was not observed, the remaining factors were affected by the level of students' interests or of their expectation that psychology would be useful. Students who originally had high "interests" had anticipated that they would become more stable as a result of taking the course. As seen in the graph for anxiety, those students who originally had high interests were also more anxious. Participation in the course, however, seems to have decreased their anxiety to the same level as other students.

These results support an interpretation that the course contributed to the mental stability of the students, and that this effect was more apparent for those students who reported being more anxious when the class began. These anxious students were possibly more highly motivated because they had expected to utilise the class as "an occasion for self-searching." Thus, more anxious students attended the class with an awareness of their own problems. To the extent that the class met their expectations, they were able to reduce their anxiety dramatically.

Although actual causes for the effect are unclear, students who had anticipated that the class would "not be useful" reported lower ability to concentrate before undertaking the course. It seems practical to assume that they had become more self-aware because they found they were able to concentrate on the course materials because the class was unexpectedly interesting despite their anticipation that the course would be "useless." Based on our classroom observations, male students reacted to the lessons with more apparent enthusiasm, although in fact there were no particular differences by gender as a result.

To conclude, the results show that the class was found to be both "useful" and "interesting" by a large proportion of the students, who also reported that their concentration had improved and that they were less nervous or anxious. Similar to other classes in comprehensive psycho-education, the students who were more deliberate in comparing class lessons with their own experience were more likely to benefit from the class. By contrast, the students who were attracted only to potential academic aspects of "psychology" may be less interested in actually applying their study to changing their own behavior even though they have some surface interest.

Looking Ahead

We are well aware that these results are derived from testing two groups of students with similar but not identical interventions or measures and no concurrent basis of comparison. The "course" was conducted using one optional course in which two classes of high school seniors participated in two different academic years, and the effects were confirmed by the difference in scores of pre-posttests. Further, we recognize that, in the absence of control groups for these trials, the observed effects could be derived from factors external to the course, not the least of which is the novelty of the course itself. In particular, we have very limited data on any consequent student behavior beyond the classroom, specifically related to enhancing self-reliance and the reduction of school violence.

In interpreting these results, the following factors can be hypothesized as contributing to the overall main effects of participation in the course: (1) a structured program of group work; (2) a developmentally appropriate study of selected topics in psychology; (3) participation in a highly-publicized experimental course (Hawthorne effect); and (4) external factors, specifically related to student status (e.g. pressure of impending entrance examination, senior standing). Clearly, more work needs to be done to standardize the curriculum, document instructional practices, especially related to group process, and to assess behaviors related to changes in knowledge, attitudes, and skills that are hypothesized to have an effect on self-assertion, interpersonal effectiveness, and the reduction of school violence.

In Conclusion

The implementation of comprehensive a psycho-education program in a year-round class for secondary school students is unprecedented in Japanese public schools, and the analysis of its

effect and progress has just started. For us, curriculum development is an ongoing, iterative process that demands constant attention to our evolving understanding of how to translate our assumptions to promoting adolescent development in a collectivist culture undergoing rapid transformation.

For the future, we would like to continue to refine the curriculum and to test for anticipated changes in student development. Concurrently, we want to train a cohort of Japanese counselors and teachers to implement our group work approach to curriculum development in local schools. Currently in Japan, there are approximately 2,000 school counselors and another 7,800 licensed clinical psychologists, many of whom work with families and school personnel. Significantly, few of these counseling professionals have any training in group work, having been educated in the psychodynamic approaches, especially Jungian, that dominate Japanese psychology training. Anticipating that some 10,000 counselors will need to be trained in the next three years alone to meet the projected demand, it is imperative that training programs for school counselors include preparation in group work that is developmentally appropriate for children and adolescents and is sensitive to the organizational dynamics of Japanese public schools.

Similarly, we would like to introduce American school counselors to the well-established community-building practices that characterize Japanese schooling. It is anticipated that we will draw upon collaborative networks already established between university faculty at the four national universities (Tokyo, Kyoto, Kyushu, and Nagoya) in Japan and at The University of Georgia and their public school colleagues throughout Japan and Georgia, respectively, to identify potential participants. In particular, we will seek individuals who will be in the best position to implement group work and community building strategies as part of the work of the school counselor in both countries.

The training of counselors and counselor educators to use written curricular materials designed to support group discussion in Japanese schools and to develop learning communities in American schools can help to address limitations identified by critics of both educational systems. The development and evaluation of models for counselor preparation and service delivery should provide a cross-cultural comparison of their effectiveness in responding to changing social conditions. The comparative evaluation of school counseling interventions in

both American and Japanese schools can reveal how systems of beliefs and expectations contribute to the effectiveness of each system in promoting student development.

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Addendum

Multiculturalism

For our last class with the high school students before the mid-semester exams and the summer break, we developed a session on multiculturalism. After reviewing sets of prepared exercises used to introduce American students to multiculturalism (see, for example, Locke,) we became aware that these material would need substantial revision to enable their use with Japanese adolescents. Japanese, for the most part, are unaware of their differences due, in part, to the great cultural press to agree, to avoid conflict, and to seek out compromise and the national assumption/mythology of a single and unified culture. Consequently, group exercises that are intended to highlight cultural differences among, for instance, a culturally diverse population of urban American school children, and then encourage student discussion related to finding common ground in a modern democracy, are problematic for simple adaptation with Japanese students.

We decided to start out with a brief introduction by one of the doctoral students, Ms. Ayako Takaoka, on "When was it that you first became aware that you were Japanese?" Several students who had traveled to the US or England reflected on their experiences of being seen differently by others and one, in particular, talked of being identified as Chinese. "It's not that there is anything wrong with being Chinese," she said, "Only that it amazed me that they couldn't tell the difference!" Ms. Takaoka, who is Japanese, received her graduate education at Boston University and was a school counselor in the US before returning to Japan. She shared what it was like for her to be Japanese in another culture—of being viewed by some as less intelligent while she was improving her English or of how routine the questions about Japan became (e.g., sushi, chop sticks, Hiroshima). In addition, she and the others (when prompted) shared what it was like to be seen as "impure" by some Japanese who view "kikokushijo" [returnees] as somehow contaminated by having lived in another culture for more than a year. Having become linguistically and culturally different as a result of their foreign experience, their reintegration into mainstream Japanese society is seen as problematic by some and leads to a rather ambiguous status as both insider and outsider. This introduction seemed to meet our intention to warm them to the idea that there IS something about being Japanese per se. And, in time, it would set the stage for introducing the idea that one might be Japanese in different ways.

We followed this brief exchange involving the whole class with a role play between Ms. Takaoka and the first author, who is American. He asked her (in Japanese) to tell him where she is from ("Ano, sumimasen ga, anata wa doko no kuni no kata desu ka?"), to which she responded "Watashi wa Nihonjin desu" [I am Japanese]. We have found the students do much better in the exercises if we model an answer first. Then he asked them the same question in Japanese, with them all responding to him (although many were surprised that he spoke to them in Japanese, with one student even congratulating him on his pronunciation).

With that organizing set established, they were asked to consider the following scenario:

> Aliens from another planet have contacted officials here in Japan to notify them that an asteroid is fast approaching Earth and that it will destroy the entire planet in the next 60 days. They are prepared to evacuate some Earthlings but can accommodate only about 100 million people (coincidently, the current population of Japan). Because they have intercepted transmissions between Japanese using cell phones (35 million currently in use), they are predisposed to like the Japanese people but aren't sure they could identify one if they met one. Thus, they need to know what it is that would make a person Japanese so that they can ensure that Japanese will be first to get on the ships they are sending to Earth for the mass evacuation.

Of course, in Japanese, the telling of the story takes longer and is a bit more poetic, but you get the general idea. Those of you familiar with the life boat dilemma will recognize the parallels here. The choice of a fantasy was intended to tap into the child that seems to lie beneath the surface of any Japanese, whatever the age. Indeed, the university faculty and the half dozen teachers who were visiting class that day were delighted with the scenario and eagerly joined in the exercise.

We then set them the task of writing individually their own answers to the question, "If asked, how would you prove that you are Japanese?" (We have found we need to get them to commit their individual answers to print first before sharing them so that they won't miss their own contributions to the ensuing discussion.) Then we put them into groups by having them count off by sixes. We have tried a variety of ways to match them up using origami birds, birthdays, favorite colors and so forth, only to find that a group of 2-3 boys seem to figure out the system each week and end up together anyway. This week we simply had them count off by six and

then put the ones, twos, threes etc. together, ensuring that those sitting close to one another couldn't be in the same small group. (Of course, they'll figure this one out too, but in the meantime, they are getting more comfortable with working with relative "strangers.") Each group was instructed to review the set of answers and to develop a comprehensive list of criteria for posting on newsprint to be hung on the board at the front of the class. Once posted, all sheets were reviewed and redundant items were crossed off.

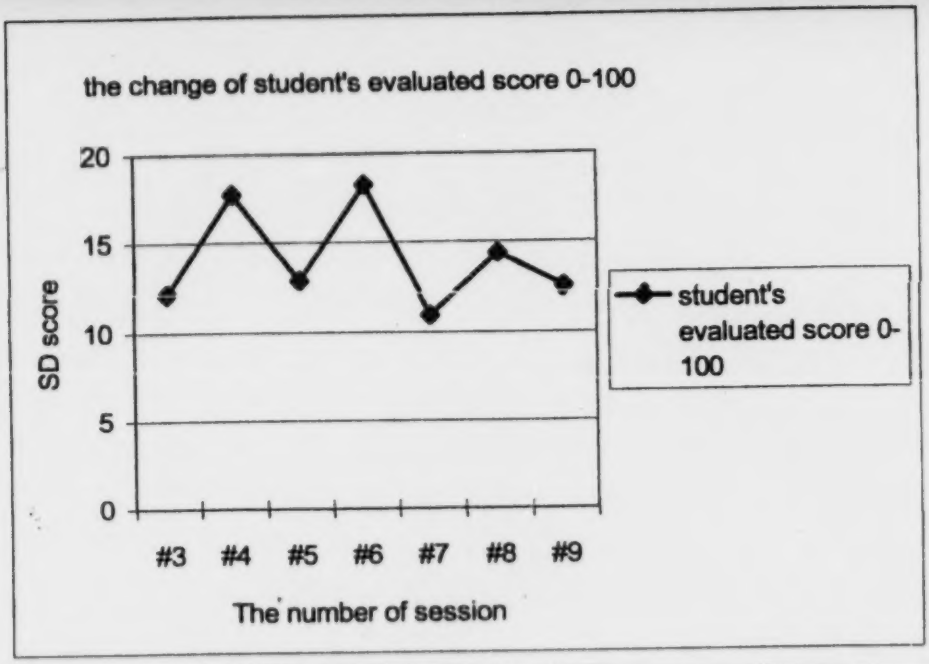
"Chotto matte! Chotto matte! [Wait a minute]", the American said (The interruption was pre-arranged as part of the exercise). "Watashi wa Nihonjin desu," he said boldly (to the amusement of the students. "Watashi wa ikitai" [I want to go], he added and then proceeded to put up his list (written in a very simple Japanese.) The list included things like eating sushi with chopsticks, driving a Japanese car, speaking Japanese, having friends who are Japanese, having a son who was born in Japan, and living and working in Japan.

Each group then reassembled and was given the task of rank ordering the class list to identify the top and bottom five "best" criteria for deciding who is Japanese. Then, composite lists were posted as before and reviewed by the class as a whole. The whole class list put cultural artifacts at the top of the list (using and understanding the language not just speaking it; observing the customs and festivals of the Japanese (e.g., no shoes in the house, celebrating ancestors in August); physical characteristics such as black hair and brown eyes; and eating especially Japanese foods like fermented soybean (natto). At the bottom of the list were cultural artifacts that could be acquired by others such as driving a Japanese car, preceded by having Japanese friends, eating with chopsticks, eating Japanese food, and the like. In effect, the things on the American's list were eliminated, although many students had similar items on their own lists. In processing the list, the American continued to complain about not being included among those who get to be saved and asked what he might do to become Japanese (learn the language, climb Mt. Fuji, and learn to like natto, they agreed).

In the ten or so minutes remaining we asked them to consider if the making of such lists was fair and who should decide if it is? Have Japanese ever used such lists to exclude others? (Of course, that is how the Imperial Japanese justified the colonization of Korea, a war on China, and the subjugation of foreign "comfort women" as sex slaves for the army). And is it necessary for such lists to be written down as laws or can a society have operational lists that include

some and exclude others (Of course, that is the current attitude toward the many minorities that currently populate Japan, including foreign nationals, immigrants, returning Japanese, native peoples such as Okinawans and Ainus, and "aoime no gaijin" [blue-eyed foreigners] such as the first author). And finally, have they ever been excluded by the making of such lists? (Of course, that is the basic exam structure for entrance to the next level of schooling.)

It was a wonderful way to end the class this spring. The visitors were duly impressed with the students' energy and full attention, and the students gave the class its highest rating so far this semester. Everyone was involved throughout the two class periods and we had no trouble getting them in and out of small groups into the large discussion. In all, it was concrete evidence of our progress in moving them along in asserting themselves publicly while retaining their interpersonal sensitivity. Inspired by what they saw and their own participation, the visitors committed themselves to the development of a similar curriculum at their own school upon their return.



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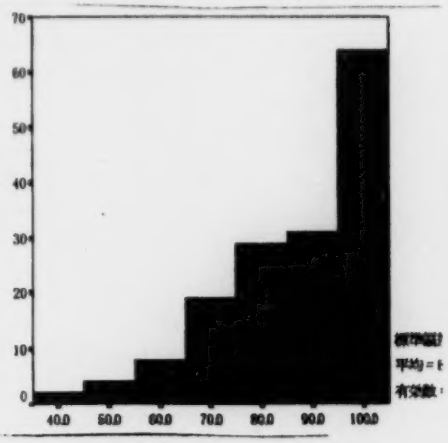
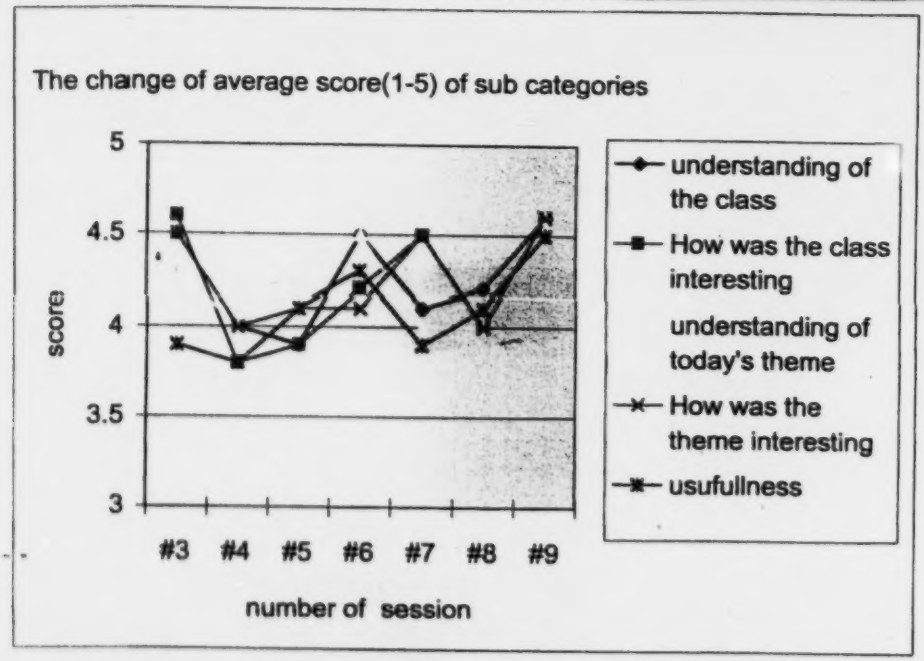
The histogram of evaluated score added every students and every session





		self-understanding	complex	dream	listening	caree	assertion	culture-difference
	The number of students attended	22	25	22	23	22	24	22
	average	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9
a	understanding of the class	4.5	4	3.9	4.5	4.1	4.2	4.6
v	How was the class interesting	4.6	3.8	3.9	4.2	4.5	4	4.6
e	understanding of today's theme	4.3	4	4.2	4.5	4	4	4.6
r	How was the theme interesting	4.5	4	4.1	4.1	4.5	4	4.6
a	usufullness	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.3	3.9	4.1	4.5
g	student's evaluated score 0-100	87.2	82.8	85.9	86.3	88	85.1	88.1
e	evaluated original score 0-∞	89.1	182	85.9	4921	98.5	89.3	93

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